



The Montana Bear Program is a partnership with the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor, ExecutivePulse and MEDA.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2008

THE MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM IS PROVING ITS SUCCESS

Proving Success in Growth: The chart below demonstrates an increase in Outreach Visits to businesses. In 2006 there were 142 total visits, 233 in 2007 and rose to 275 in 2008. Overall program outreach visits have almost doubled since 2006.

Productivity By Date of Outreach Visits in Montana for 2008

Month, Year	Records	Percent
January 2008	49	18%
February 2008	29	11%
March 2008	24	9%
April 2008	16	6%
May 2008	16	6%
June 2008	35	13%
July 2008	23	8%
August 2008	24	9%
September 2008	14	5%
October 2008	13	5%
November 2008	17	6%
December 2008	15	5%
	275	100%

Proving Success in Growth by Geography

North Central Montana: 58 visits; South Central Montana: 123 visits

Southwest Montana: 43 visits; Western Montana: 51

Note: Several Eastern Montana BEAR Teams were trained in December 2008 and will begin outreach visits in 2009.

2006 Counties	Visits	2007 Counties	Visits	2008 Counties	Visits
Flathead County	83	Flathead County	27	Flathead County	12
Yellowstone County	34	Yellowstone County	69	Yellowstone County	80
Butte/Silver Bow	19	Butte/Silver Bow	8	Butte/Silver Bow	35
Anaconda/Deer Lodge	1	Anaconda Deer Lodge	2	Anaconda Deer Lodge	3
Cascade County	5	Cascade County	48	Cascade County	46

		Park County	12	Park County	16
		Wheatland County	1	Wheatland County	1
		Musselshell County	1	Musselshell County	1
		Missoula County	20	Missoula County	4
		Ravalli County	17	Ravalli County	24
		Mineral County	10	Mineral County	0
		Lincoln County	5	Lincoln County	5
		Lake County	3	Lake County	6
		Fergus County	5	Fergus County	7
		Hill County	3	Hill County	3
		Judith County	2	Judith Basin County	1
				Choteau County	1
				Big Horn County	1
				Carbon County	8
				Stillwater County	15
				Sweet Grass County	1
				Broadwater County	1
				Gallatin County	3
				Lewis and Clark County	1

Total visits 2008 275

Proving Success in Growth through Outreach Specialists

- ▶ Number of active Outreach Specialists in 2006: 25
- ▶ Number of active Outreach Specialists in 2007: 64
- ▶ Number of active Outreach Specialists in 2008: 78

Outreach Specialists in 2008 with 3 or more visits

Alfrey, Tom	12	Johnson, Deanna	3
Axtell, Nancy	13	Judd, Vicki	5
Bailey, Kathie	5	Klaman, John	3
Barney, Lad	8	Kramer, Melissa	16
Bertolino, Joel	10	Mantooth, Carrie	8
Cannon, Kathleen	13	McIntyre, Tracy	4
Detrick, Dale	4	McNeill, Linda	30
Erickson, Todd	3	Moody, Kathy	56
Foster, Julie	4	Mousley, Heather	7
Gardner, DeLynn	8	Pulver, Amyee	11
Gorman, Thomas	3	Smitham, Jim	13
Hanken, Susan	15	Steele, Vickie	6
Hardy, Barbara	17	VanTighem, Steve	18
Hartman, Kendall	16	Zdinak, Andy	21
Hays, Rae Lynn	3		
Helvik, Rebecca	8		
House, Adele	53		

Proving success in Summary Report Comparisons:

Summary Reports – Comparison of 2006, 2007 and 2008

	1/1/2006 – 12/31/2006	1/1/2007 – 12/31/2007	1/1/2008 – 12/31/2008
Generated Referrals:	119	233	515
Successfully Closed Referrals:	86	125	429
Time Spent (in hours):	178	243	590
Estimated Total Increase in Revenues:	\$0	\$30,000	\$51,800
Jobs Created:	18	139	4
Jobs Retained:	0	10	24

Proving success in referrals generated, closed and still in progress.

Referral status	Count in 2006	Count in 2007	Count in 2008
Open	15	113	122
Successfully closed	70	106	357
Unable to close	34	14	36
	119	233	515

Referral type	2006		2007		2008	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Information only	70	81%	65	52%	156	36%
Project driven	16	19%	57	46%	273	64%
Not Yet Determined	0	0%	3	2%	0	0%
	86	100%	125	100%	429	100%

The following is a list of current referral agencies that have responded to requests for assistance:

ACCU-TAX	Great Falls Development Authority	Montana Tech
Billings Job Service	Great Falls Job Service	Montana World Trade Center
Business Improvement District	Green Valley Designs	MSU
		MSUGFCollege of Technology Outreach & Workforce Development
Butte Chamber of Commerce	Headwaters RC&D	NWTACC Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center
Butte Job Service	Job Service	PPL
Cascade County	John P Mabie CPA	Ravalli Republic
Centene Corp.	Lisa A. King	SCORE
City of Great Falls	Livingston First Interstate Bank	TransTech Center
Consulting	Livingston Job Service	URA
CynRoc	Maverick Group	
Department of Commerce, International Trade & Relations Bureau	Missoula Job Service	Wendy J. Weissman, CPA, PC
Department of Labor and Industry Workforce Services Division	Montana Apprenticeship & Training Program	Zee Creative
MT Dept. of Commerce	Montana Manufacturing Extension Center	Montana Tech
dStudio 12	Montana Procurement and Technical Assistance	
Flathead Electric Cooperative	Montana State University-Billings	

Summary of type of Need Addressed:

Type of Need	Count in 2006	Count in 2007	Count in 2008
Domestic/global marketing and sales	11	17	45
Entrepreneurship/management	16	33	55
Environment/government regulations	6	6	3
Financing/capital	7	15	15
Foreign trade zone	0	0	1
Information technologies	0	1	2
Local government services	5	5	25
Location assistance	2	0	4
Operations/production	6	12	8
Product development	0	1	0
State government	0	2	0
Transportation/logistics/supply chain	1	0	1
Utility	2	0	5
Workforce/training	30	33	265
	86	125	429

Business Owners ranked Worker's Comp, Health Care and Workforce Availability as their highest concerns:

Workman's Compensation Rates	Response	Count	Percent
	Excellent	4	2%
	Good	55	22%
	Fair	77	31%
	Poor	73	30%
	No opinion	37	15%
		246	100%

Health Care	Response	Count	Percent
	Excellent	5	2%
	Good	40	16%
	Fair	64	26%
	Poor	115	46%
	No opinion	24	10%
		248	100%

Workforce Availability	Response	Count	Percent
	Excellent	17	7%
	Good	62	25%
	Fair	77	31%
	Poor	79	32%
	No opinion	13	5%
		248	100%

Industries Served 2008:

NAICS Codes	1/1/2006 - 12/31/2006		1/1/2007 - 12/31/2007		1/1/2008 - 12/31/2008	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
11 - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing ...	3	3%	6	3%	6	2%
21 - Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and ...	1	1%	1	0%	2	1%
22 - Utilities	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%
23 - Construction	9	8%	24	10%	18	7%
31 - Manufacturing, (food, beverage,...	5	4%	3	1%	9	3%
32 - Manufacturing, (wood, paper, et...	1	1%	8	3%	9	3%
33 - Manufacturing, (primary and fab...	9	8%	29	12%	11	4%
42 - Wholesale Trade	6	5%	14	6%	6	2%
44 - Retail Trade, (motor vehicle, f...	9	8%	29	12%	24	9%
45 - Retail Trade, (sporting goods, ...	6	5%	32	14%	34	12%
48 - Transportation and Warehousing,...	12	10%	9	4%	3	1%
51 - Information	6	5%	6	3%	12	4%
52 - Finance and Insurance	2	2%	5	2%	12	4%
53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leas...	5	4%	3	1%	4	1%
54 - Professional, Scientific, and T...	13	11%	13	6%	33	12%
56 - Administrative and Support and ...	3	3%	4	2%	7	3%
61 - Educational Services	0	0%	3	1%	4	1%
62 - Health Care and Social Assistan...	11	9%	23	10%	29	11%
71 - Arts, Entertainment, and Recrea...	2	2%	2	1%	7	3%
72 - Accommodation and Food Services	4	3%	5	2%	16	6%
81 - Other Services (except Public A...	8	7%	14	6%	22	8%
92 - Public Administration	4	3%	0	0%	5	2%
	119	100%	233	100%	275	100%

BUSINESSES VISITED ACCORDING TO SALES:

Businesses with under \$500,000 in sales: 176
 Businesses with \$500,000 to \$1 million in sales: 30
 Businesses with \$1 million to \$5 million in sales: 45
 Businesses with \$5 million to \$10 million in sales: 9
 Businesses with \$10 million to \$25 million in sales: 8
 Businesses with \$25 million to \$50 million in sales: 3
 Businesses with \$50 million to \$75 million in sales: 2
 Businesses with \$75 million on up in sales: 2

BUSINESS OWNER FEEDBACK ON BEAR

Here is what Montana business owners said about the program:

- ❖ Add the word "extremely" to your satisfaction survey. Your program is amazing.
- ❖ This program allows business owners to work "on" their business rather than just "in" their business.
- ❖ I wish I had contacted the Bear program sooner as I believe we would have benefited more from some of the resources and suggestions as a result. The assistance we received with staff recruitment and supervisory training was invaluable.
- ❖ The BEAR program has helped me to greatly expand my services.
- ❖ I believe that the concept of helping small business in Montana to retain valuable staff by assisting the business to train their staff so as to make them more efficient at what they do will benefit the business, its customers, the employee and the state as a whole has a lot of merit.
- ❖ The Bear program has worked and continues to work very well for us since we are a new and growing business. We have been able to get funds for training that we otherwise would not be able to have afforded and we have made some great contacts through our training as well.
- ❖ A company of our size has a limited budget to pay for training opportunities. With assistance from BEAR, we were able to leverage our funds to offer excellent training to more of our staff.
- ❖ The BEAR program does not have enough training dollars. It needs more funding.
- ❖ The BEAR Program is very useful for business owners as it provides the resources to access the business tools/information we need, but are not always able to find.

In Conclusion:

The BEAR program began in Billings in 2001 and spread to Kalispell, Great Falls and Butte. With the purchase of Executive Pulse data access for the entire state in 2006, the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) paved the way for the statewide BEAR (Business Expansion And Retention) Program to flourish. Now working as a partnership, the GOED, Montana Department of Commerce, Montana Department of Labor and MEDA administer the statewide program. Thanks to incredible dedication and professionalism on the part of individual BEAR teams all across the state, businesses are getting much needed support, which plays a key role in the growth and stability of Montana's economy. The MEDA BEAR Working Group has been a tremendous asset in the implementation of the program statewide.

Part of the success in 2008 was due to an Incumbent Worker Training Grant pilot program that was operated in Billings, Livingston and Lewistown. It is hoped that legislation will be successful to allow this pilot program to be implemented statewide.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael O'Rourke Gloria O'Rourke
Montana BEAR Statewide Coordinators

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